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AUTHOR Reyes, Miguel Torres
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ABSTRACT

Highlighting the importance of media education in Latin America, this paper describes projects conducted by the Latin American Institute for Communicative Education and the National Council for the Population of Mexico to examine the family's influence in promoting critical television viewing. A theoretical model for media education is then presented, followed by descriptions of projects in schools designed to train parents to encourage critical viewing on the part of their children. It is noted that similar projects have been carried out with both inservice and preservice teachers. (33 references) (GL)

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FAMILY AND TELEVISION:
SOME LATINOAMERICAN EXPERIENCES

Prof. Miguel Reyes Torres
Universidad de Playa Ancha
de Ciencias de la Educación, Valparaíso.

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FAMILY AND TELEVISION: SOME LATINOAMERICAN EXPERIENCES

1. Media Education development in Latin American countries 1

1.1 A growing field 2
Meeting places 3
Opinions 4

1.2 Development relevance 5

1.3 Concerning family and media in Latin America 7
- The experience of Instituto Latinoamericano de Pedagogía de las Comunicaciones (ILPEC) 8
Methodology 10
- The experience of Consejo Nacional de Población (CONAPO) 11

2. Our theorical model on Media Education 13

2.1 How do I feel education? How do I intend to conceptualize it? 13
Media Education 17

2.2 Working areas 18

2.3 Working situations 21
School environment 22
Family context 23
To family trough school 24

3. Parent's school "Family an Television" 26

3.1 Description 26
Objectives and theorical supports 26
Methodology of descriptive analysis 30
Methodology of syllabus 31

3.2 Results 33
Experimental application at San Ignacio School 33
Experimental application at Juan XXIII School 35

3.3 Perspectives for the near future 38
Bibliography 41

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Prof. M. Reyes T. June 1988

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Family and Television: some latinamerican experiences

Prof. Miguel Reyes T.

1) Media Education development in Latin American countries.

It has been suggested by some that the continent with the greatest development in Media Education is Latin America. Though this statement might be denied by some, I should like to point out the fact that in the last ten years some extremely important projects have been undertaken in diverse Latin American countries, all relating to active reception to Mass Media. These countries are: Brazil, Argentina, Columbia, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Venezuela.

There are certainly many different approaches and purposes in the projects that we will call Media Education. Some assume a wide social perspective by proposing social transformation through the control of the media. Names, such as Critical Analysis in the Social Communication Media already point to this perpective. Others believe in the task of educating the general public through T.V., thereby improving relations among the diverse groups of TV watchers. Finally, others assume doctrinal purposes, e.g. evangelization projects.

The same can be applied to the education task, which can be effected in diverse ways. Media Education is, however, quite incapable of uniting purposes and objectives, and attempting this may be as utopic as uniting ideologies.

I would not, however, doubt that there are many common elements in the work being carried out throughout Latin America on the subject of Media Education especially

the short term projects. Consequently, the term 'active reception' expresses the majority of the projects to which I will be referring. The goal is to achieve a change of attitude in T.V. audiences, and to convert them into participants in their process of decodifying the message. I would venture to say that active reception is a short-term commun denominator which has helped researchers to develop education through the use of Media .

1.1.) A Growing Field.

It is possible that the strong influence in the messages of the Social Mass Media with structured models has initially caused a defensive attitude e.g. in some European countries from the cinema-forum to the current purposes of Critical Analysis which is being researched in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

It is quite certain that in the 1980's, television has played an important role in education, having great impact on children, teenagers and adults too. Specific methods have been created and diffused in a number of Universities, in Caracas, the Universidad Catolica "Andrés Bello",La U. Industrial of Santander, Columbia, the Catholic Universities of Sao Paulo in Brazil, Chile and Valparaiso also in Chile. These same methods are also being studied in several private Institutes such as: CONAPO, ILCE, ILPEC, CENECA, the Bellarmino Center, etc. Some of these methodologies deal with the general problem, while others, are tackling specific problems such as, general Knowledge of the Media, or the study of the kinds of particular messages and finally other methodologies have been set up for specific reception groups. There is

also an educational programme for T.V. to be included in the formal system of education, although there isn't a special discipline at the curriculum level in primary and secondary teaching or schooling yet. All this points to fact that Media Education is a fertile field in Latin American countries.

Meeting Places.

As well as methods and programmes being formed, in the last few years various meeting places have been used for the researchers in Media Education in America.

For a number of years now, a Brazilian Society has sponsored international meetings whose objectives have been the stimulation of Critical Analysis in the Social Mass Media. With the backing and support of the Brazilian Christian Union for Social Communication, this organization has not only organized (or held) the meetings, but it has also developed several initiatives toward the development of the critical ability among the T.V. audiences.

In Chile, under the name Meetings for Children's TV, the Catholic University of Chile undertook three important meetings between 1981 and 1983 with the sponsorship of the German Government and with the participation of European Mass Media experts. Although the theme was quite extensive, the School of Journalism got together teachers, communicators and parent in these meetings with the clear goal of educating the Media.

Later in 1984 - 5, the Chilean University of Playa Ancha de Ciencias de la Educación has promosed meetings

of researchers and teachers through the organization of National Meetings on Media Education. As one of the main characteristics of the university is teacher training more emphasis has been placed on education of students as autonomus subjects emphasising, active reception as an educational task. The first meeting was based on "Education of the T.V. viewer" and the second on 'Educating with the Press and T.V.' as its central theme, and which united educators and a number of social workers and directors of the press and media.

With the backing of international organizations, including World Action for Christian Communication and the Regional Office of UNESCO for Latin America and the Carribean, two Latin American Seminars have taken place relating to specifics in T.V. Education. The first meeting in Santiago, Chile, brought together sixteen papers from seven Latin American countries. The second, was held in Curitiba Brazil in July 1986, and the third is scheduled to take place in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Opinions.

Without wanting to judge the quality of the work so far accomplished, as it would be pretentious to do so, I would like to quote an opinion of Mr. Robert White, Director of the Centre for the Study of Communication and Culture (CSCC) in London, at the presentation of the book 'Education in T.V. Communication' who says, "..On my talk on materials about 'Media Education' I believe that Latin America has the most complete and most advanced ideas in the world".

I can definitely affirm that I have seen this area grow in leaps and bounds, and that the future possibilities are really also very promising.

In our university alone, in the last six years, we have developed four research projects, nineteen pre-grade and post-grade theses, and have created a Research Centre along with an improvement programme of three terms for primary and pre-school teachers.

1.2.) Development relevances.

What importance can the development of Media Education have for Latin American countries?

For a new continent, consisting of countries with less than 180 years of independant life, and which strongly depend on other developed countries economically and culturally.

For a group of countries in which one half of all T.V. programmes are imported and filmed abroad, and where the educational systems are frequently foreign models, European in their style and do not portray home realities.

So what importance can Media Education have? I am already answering by contextualising the problem, however, I don't expect a complete remedy for a new continent as a result of these efforts.

I believe that the educational systems in our countries are undergoing a deep crisis compared to Europe, due to the widening and growing difference between the introduction of science and technology and what the systems is able to absorb as far as contents and resources are concerned.

This gap grows daily, and I would say that only serious attempts to improve the situation, is when hardware enterprizes try to introduce their products in educational systems.

The forming of teachers remains the same as in the 1960's, and these same Teachers in the primary and secondary school systems find themselves with these technological gifts, lacking knowledge in exactly what or how they can be used.

From our viewpoint of the situation, we feel that there are sufficient reasons to take into consideration the importance of education of the media audience.

Likewise, in this cross road it must be considered the Social Mass Media have and important part of current information, and have at hand the scientific and technological material that will be broadcasted.

From my point of view Media Education, adquires a distinct relevance in this context, as it helps to close the gap which results in the new classroom generations learning 'useless subjects' and the upward advance in science.

I would like to anticipatea personal way, according to my own judgement Mass Media Education should not be included as a subject in school curriculums. I see it rather, as something that is able to give a new perspective in the world-wide educational system, including the training of teachers, who will eventually be more open toward outside system cultural agents, and concentrate on the forming and development of individual personalities.

The current reality shows us that a great part of

the contents in education is being decided by some outside the system e.g. Social Media Communication, meanwhile, the system should take on the task of forming and developing criteria, thereby take advantage of the elements what these outside agents can offer them for the benefit of each and every student.

A structure of this type in our young continent could be a real beginning of development.

1.3.) Concerning Family and Media in Latin America.

Possibly our latin origins, derived from the Spanish who gave birth to our race, influence us to such an extent that the family institution has greater relevance and lasts longer in our countries compared to other Anglo-Saxon countries. The idea that the family is largely responsible for education seems to be universally recognized.

Several Latin American projects related to the Television as a tool of learning have been carried out among families. It can be supposed that some of the objectives of preparation for Active Reception require methods that can be easily undergone al school, and that these objectives are related to Cognitive Domain, such as knowledge of the media. Others, which are related more to affective domain such às valorating, can be appropriately reached when applied within families.

It would be pretentious of me to try to summarize the results in Latin America with regard to Families and Social Mass Media Communication, when the existing publications give account of one part of this experience

e.g. what is happening in a country or city. (1)

Due to this, I prefer to describe two relevant experiences on family education in the advantages of T.V. education. The first concerns Workshops for Families, developed in San José, Costa Rica called "Nuevas Relaciones Familiares a partir de la Televisión" ("New Family Relations starting on TV"), and the second, by the Consejo Nacional de Población de México teaching families to watch TV, called "La Televisión y los niños" ("Television and children").

The Experiences of the Instituto Latinoamericano de Pedagogía de las Comunicaciones. ILPEC.

(Latin American Institute for Communicative Education).

Since its beginnings this Institute has been concerned with the training of the TV viewer, basing its theories on Pedagogía del Lenguaje Total, which is also being developed along the same lines in France. Since 1982, it has planned activities primarily on the active training of the TV viewer, through the implementation of a methodology of critical analysis upon watching TV. The objectives of this methodology are:

1) Conceptualize the problem of the relationship Family-TV, and to discover the relationship

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1. One of the most complete studies that I know of, on the subject of Mass Media Social Communication that influence on children is that pertaining to Dr. Maria Josefa Dominguez in Bucaramanga, and which has been published under the title "Los Niños y los Medios de Comunicación Social" (Mass Media Communication and Children").

within the family in the home in which the TV plays a decisive role.

2) Apply the methodology of critical analysis to a TV programme.

3) Get involved with education and the use of the said methodology at a family level to achieve the objectives in the TV viewer of applied cristisism.

The methodoly which goes by the name of 'New Family Relations starting on TV' is based on that "It's not the TV in itself that is bad, but rather the family relationship which TV produces, arouses ". (2), that is why solutions must be found at a family level.

Among some of the theoretical fundaments upon which the methodology is based, is the particular relevance of the concept of TV-kids. "The term TV-kids or Children of the TV, is applied to those childred who see the TV as a part of the family unit. For TV-kids, the television has become as necessary as electricity and tap water" (3). Under this concept the television becomes a new member of the family accomplishing certain purposes, depending on the person with whom it establishes close relations. What is certain, is that family life has been heavily influenced by this 'new member' and the methodology hopes to re-establish the right relationship among the members of the family, with the TV.

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2. Fuenzalida Valerio (ed) "Educación para la Comunicación televisiva" ("Education in Televized Communication"). CENECA, Santiago, 1986 page. 46.

3. Ibidem. p. 47.

Methodology

The development of this methodology is obtained through parralel workshops in which parents and children between the ages of seven to twelve years old take part in a two day period in a boarding system consisting of three stages.

The first stage is a situational study, taking into account the Family-TV problem and shedding light on family relations with respect to the presence of the TV in the home.

During these activities, the parents compare between the characteristics of the ideal family with TV and the ideal family without TV. In work with the children, games are played to find out what the children know about TV programes.

In the second stage, a critical analysis of a certain TV programme is carried out. Parents and children work together, while parents observe the children's reaction as they watch the programme.

In the third stage, organization and commitment is established to determine methods to be applied within the family while watching TV, thereby creating healthy communication and relations among the members of the family.

Toward the end of the worksop, the participating family groups endeavor to work together eight consecutive days on activities concerning the third stage. An encounter in the following week allows for an exchange of results and reactions, and also creates motives for the work to be continued.

In 1982, we recieved Dr. Francisco Gutierrez Director of the ILPEC, in our university who shared with us on this methodology in their initial stages and experiments. The work was carried out among professors and students, with a work modal based upon relative affects and causing active and stimulating participation. Without a shadow of a doubt Dr. Gutierrez's visit helped us greatly in our task of Media Education and directing part of our work in the use of the TV for family education.

The experiences of Consejo Nacional de Población, CONAPO.

In 1980, the 'National Council for the Population of Mexico', sent a publication to parents, children, teachers and promoters of childrens's materials titled "Children and Television", which was printed by UNESCO's Regional Office for Latin America and the Carribean. The purpose of the leaflet was to "....create goodwill among families....so that children and youth actively learn to watch TV, not taking it as an unquestionable source of information, but rather as an opportunity to arouse and create curiosity and creativity" (4). It is rather hoped that TV will become a useful tool for the main educational institutions, families and schools, feeding and propognating good family communications.

CONAPO's Publication addresses the following t'hemes:

The need for good communications within the family

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4. Consejo Nacional de Población de México. "La Televisión y los Niños". México 1980. p.4.

unit, and the advantages of this communication in relation to mass communication.

Sexual education within the family and reactions to the stereotype men and women who appear on TV.

The negative influence of TV in education, by model behaviour contrary to the values taught at home and at school to children. There is also an analysis as to what influence the TV plays in children's behaviour.

In seek solutions the National Council for the Population in proposing several interesting alternatives:

The first is that parents become conscious of the role of the TV in the home, the importance that it plays on each of the parents, and its influence on the life of the children.

. The publishers concentrate on the need to clarify what parents expect from their children. Rather than forbidding them to watch a TV programme they should try to inspire them to grow physically, emotianally and intellectually. That children play and laugh in the fresh air, that they be able to concentrate as they study and that they be imaginative, etc.

The second suggestion refers to the establishing of certain rules within the family with regard to the use of the TV. i.e. set times, days, kinds of programmes, and which programmes are appropiate for children to watch under their parents' supervision, etc.

Finally, the leaflet shows picture-stories with exercises designed for children, helping them watch TV actively.

The material published by CONAPO has often been used in Valparaiso in talks and workshops for parents instructing them how to teach children to make better use of the TV. The material is highly stimulating and extremely instructive. The picture-stories motivate the participation of the parents in the workshops and the subjects allow a change in the nucleus of the problem... from TV to family communication.

2) Our theorical model on Media Education.

2.1.) How do I feel Education? How do I intend to conceptualize it?

Whenever I use the word "Education", I imagine that everyone else is thinking exactly as I am but it is not so. I think that this is the right moment to share some considerations about the word Education, not because I pretend to teach the meaning of the word but rather because I feel the need to make some kind of basic declaration in such a way that my understanding of Education may be discussed and shared without any upsets.

Frequently, due to my desire to find a consensus of opinion, I have asked myself, "What is the action denoted by the verb 'to educate'?".

And I have discovered that we, the professional educators, carry out our task in multiple, diverse and even apparently opposite actions. But if the question is:

"Who performs the action of the verb 'to educate'?"

In this case, the disagreement is even greater. It is difficult that the options cease to adopt extreme posi-

tions: the pupil-teacher; the educated - the educator.

I believe that each one of you should have a personal answer.

I am sure that, at this very moment, many of us are participating in a process of internal reflection in such way that we are subjects, actors in our reflection. There are times when this internal process urges us to speak and to express ourselves.

It is impossible for me to think of education as a process in which we are 'patients', as in dental treatment.

To participate, to be part of, implies a shared action.

On this basis, I would not be willing to understand the action of education as the mere act of teaching and equally not as the simple act of learning. Either of these actions can be considered as being important within the process of education but participation, as much in teaching as in learning, consist of two, complementary actions.

I want to take the liberty of repeating a slogan which first appeared some years ago: 'To educate' is a verb which should be conjugated only in plural.

Taking the disciple as the centre and actor in education is the decentralization of the phenomenon and of the process just as making the master the centre of the process is another grave error.

If we suppose that the pupil is the subject-actor and that his teacher is a gentle but secondary cooperator in the worst sense that one can understand the word

'cooperation' since this implies an action shared by two or more people, we ignore more than half of the educational process.

This probably happens today because of the notable advances and discoveries made in child psychology and we have blinded ourselves to the totality of education with the part of the process know as learning.

I suppose that education, in the deepest meaning of the word, is a dialogue between people, a shared task in wich two actors, who are both conscientious and autonomous subjects, participate.

It is as true in theory as in practice to say that the educator has the right to be subject to the education and to decide actions and that the educated has the right to free participation in the process.

I wish that 'to educate' were a defective verb which could only be conjugated in the plural: 'we educate'. It is not correct to show preference for one of the subjects: on the contrary, it is opportune, both in theory and in practice, to fix our attention on educative communication.

I suppose that an educational dialogue must be polar, dynamic and convergent.

The polarity is because there are at least two actors in the polar function, on of which gives and the other receives; one learns and one teaches; one develops himself and the other's action is formative.

It is dynamic because it is co-acted; it is not 'endured' by anyone nor is it only giving advice from time to time: it is an action or, to be more exact, an interaction.

It is convergent because, to the extent in which a point of common purpose exists between the educator and the educated, the joint action of both will be educative.

While searching for this, I dare to say that education is a process of dialogue on a determined subject with a determined objective.

Because it is a dialogue it requires two convergent elements in tension. Because the subjects is human, he must be used respectfully and respect must be given to his rational, autonomous and unique condition. And as far as guiding him towards an objective is concerned, this could be maturity or formation or the assumption of values.

Perhaps some of you are tired and have remembered something more important than the ideas which I am trying to share or perhaps your mind has quite simply turned to some other matter.

This is the precise moment in which to revitalize the idea. Educating is a process which must be participated in. We educate to the extent in which we take the decision to be an active participant in a polar process in which, by definition, we do something differente but in which, also by definition, we have a common objective. I believe that, in this precise moment, as in many moments during our lives, a specifically educative process, in which you and I are participants, can be produced.

Education is not a task which belong exclusively to the school but rather the task of people because it

is the work of the spirit. People group themselves in nuclei, which are more or less permanent, such as the family, the scholastic system and their district. Certainly the scholastic system must constantly support the systematization of the educative processes in which people participate but it can neither attribute nor deny all the responsability to the educator.

The polar positions of the educator/educated are often assumed by parents and their children but also very often they are assumed by the Social Communication Media and the receivers. For example, the transmitter of the TV. message and the viewer, the radio programmer and the listener, the reporter and the reader.

Media Education.

To define Media Education is a very difficult task, and to choose a representative theorical model of the varius realities is even a more difficult task, and the results is, of course, an alternative interpretation.

Eventhougt my educational basis lay on Philosophy of Education, I accept theorical patterns only if they allow an explanation of reality; I think that the vital experience of education is worth more than any model. If the experience breaks the model, no matter why, my choise will be the persons involved in the process, and not the theory.

We have revised various models for the education of the televiewer (and in general those of media education). Some of them are excellent for their simplicity

and aptitude for problem visualization. For example, the Method of the West Australian Education Department integrates the areas of Visual Codes and Media Studies; Gillian Corban sectorizes 5 areas - techniques, the public, Communication Media, the nature of construction and the agents.

Charles Xuereb, in a star scheme, separates and integrates the Communicator, Methods, Situation, Receiver, Content, Purpose, etc. However, these models and others we have considered seem to neglect some area and, at other times, not recognize problems.

When we became acquainted with the model of objectives for Media Education with which J.P. Golay works, it seemed to us that the visualization of the problem of educating the Media was more an all-round vision when Golay put forth his formulated objectives. In particular, I refer to the objective of self-analysis of the viewer's motives which in most of the models we knew had been reduced to an analysis of stereotypes and tendencies. I wouldn't like to attempt a comparative analysis of theorical models, but I am assured that the objectives of Golay has helped us to structure work areas in TV Education which are broad enough and implicit enough to reassure us that no important elements of the problem have been left out of the study perspectives.

2.2.) Working areas

We have denominated areas sub-divisions of the problem, not in a geographical sense but rather to set perspectives from which we can identify the problem. To begin with, the Z scheme seemed satisfactory in

representing the central objectives of Media Education, and we named one part of the problem area DEMYTHIFICATION, that is to say, the part which refers to knowledge of the media for its own sake, to be able to understand it as a producer of the media reality and as a complex enterprise structure. On the other hand, one of the areas which we appeared precisse and well delimited are it related to the TV audience itself which we will call SELF ANALYSIS in which, with the help of psichology it was necessary to recognize needs, motivations and expectation and the capacity of the media in order to satisfy or to compensate them. In this second area, we felt highly motivated to work, as we saw that it had teen rather neglected and because we felt that if we could do something from Latin America as yet unworked on, it would be specifically in this area where our work could have some sense.

A third perspective of the problem, and which in my own judgement has been well covered in Media Education is what we call alphabetization (literacy) and which is related of course to the codes and semi-codes under which Mass Media messages are made up of, particularly in TV. However, in a real working situation when we classified the relative specific objectives in each area, we came to realize that the limits which separate these areas area really non-existent, and therefore it would be better to represent the reality with the two initial areas touching them selves, superposing the language of the media as a field of interaction between the broadcaster and the recipient.

We began with a structuring of a Network of objectives in Media Education that had allowed us to organize and sequence the tasks which we are undertaking, and is so doing, we found ourselves up against a problem as a few of the objectives were getting mixed up and were overlapping (for example, to achieve in the TV viewer the recognition of a certain stereotype we had to resort to an analysis of the viewers needs and motives, however the making up of a certain stereotype, is a language problem due to the use of certain symbolic codes. Therefore, an analysis of stereotypes requires the reaching of goals set in the areas which we called Self-Analysis and Literacy). For this same reason, the segment or divisions of the problem which we had thought would be easy to separate, we later had to understand them and put them into order as perspectives or viewpoints.

To synthesize, taking into account the ultimate goal, the development and forming of autonomous subjects, coherent with their system of values we have formed the following general objective:

To develop an active perception capacity, reinterpreting media realities, evaluating word-images signs, and reevaluating one's own attitude towards the messages contained in social communication media.

To help us achieve this objective we organized the actions into these three viewpoints:

(Destroying the Myth) Knowledge and appretiation of media reality, of the people involved in it, of the media as a technological tool and as an enterprize of

social communication.

(Self-Analysis) To be conscious of the needs, motivations and reactions that Mass Media produce in the recipient to adhere or to modify his own behaviour.

(Alphabetization) Development and training of skills and aptitudes to perceive and process visual symbols (and Audial) by interpreting them and the expressing of oneself through them.

From these points, a network of objectives has permitted us to organize and put the practical work in order thereby educating the Media.

2.3.) Working Situations

In order to carry out work, we have chosen different situations that we can use for Media Education. We initiated our work with pre-school children in order to develop critical skills during this first stage (1982) and we concluded that this could only be achieved with the help of the parents, particularly in the case of children between 4 and 8 years old. This gave way to the first context division towards the educating of the TV:
a) the school environment in all its levels, and b) the family, meaning parents and relatives who might have influence on the children.

In the beginning we worked on these two contexts. In the following years we have identified a third context: media themselves as an educating agent which could be used for Media Education (based on some European experiences, we tought of applying this method in Chile).

This way is occasionally in conflict with the managerial interests of the media; never-theless, we think or hope that we will be able to teach how to watch TV trough TV in the forthcoming years.

School Environment

Our experience has shown us that Media Education can be developed through the educational system. This could be done by developing new programmes in subject-matters such as guidance, native language, arts etc. and designing new objectives for extra curricular activities such as workshops, video clubs, and others. It can also be achieved through formal curricula.

The work initially mentioned, which we called "TV Viewer Education focused on pre-school children at a level of transition.

"The first stage in teaching leads us to a change in the image and requires a definition of the audience as such. Then comes the priority of seeing its needs. This audience is formed by pre-school children, that is to say, the weakest against the powerful screen". (5)

If this work with pre-school children gave no positive results it did prove the necessity to works with the parents and therefore we have not definitely given up the intention of introducing the younger generation to the language of TV. Our university, these last months has a group of researchers experimenting with a new methodology for the teaching of how to watch TV in

5) Educación del Telespectador dirigido al preescolar de nivel transición" ("Education of the TV Viewer, designed for pre-school children in a level of transition") Academia Superior de Ciencias Pedagógicas de Valparaíso, 1982, p. 5.

nursery school. (6)

We have researched and developed several methodologies to be applied in the scholar context with students from 5th to 8th grade (10 - 13 years old), and others specially for adolescents. (7)

We have worked in the training of service teachers, at the university level, through seminars, workshops offered to differen levels of the system in different towns. Currently, we are developing a systematic specialization program for elementary school and preschool teachers, lasting three semesters, called "Medios para la Educación: TV y Computación" ("Media for Education: TV and Computers"). Since 1983, an optional course for students of Pedagogy for the High School level has been given at the Catholic University of Valparaíso, Institute of Education, called "Educación del Telespectador" ("Education of the televiewer").

Family Context

As we have said, our first researches at preschool level did not have a happy end, but it led us to attempt to work at family context. At the step, as a result of the research work to find out some criteria to watch TV, we discovered that it is impossible to establish viewing rules for the children from the

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6) RAIL Silvia, VILLARROEL Gladys. "Estrategias metodológicas para la lectura de la imagen televisiva en párvulos de 1er. y 2° nivel de transición". ("Teaching Strategies for the understanding of the TV Image for Children in the First and Second Levels of Nursery Schools") UPLACED, Valparaíso, 1987.

7) See annex Researches in scholar context.

way that adults watch. (8)

We found out that it was more appropriate to study the way children watch TV, and that their feelings, needs and motivations are. So we started in 1983 a research that originally was called "television and feelings". The researchers looked more closely at the perspective of self-analysis of the televiewer's motivations and needs at the theorical part. When we started the empirical part we chose as a target the students of 2nd grade (7 years old) in the city of Valparaíso.

We found out that is was difficult to try to cause awareness and to modify the children's habits if we did not work with their families. We therefore started to research in the extra school context and we defined, as one of our working lines, the family context.

To family through school.

The different context, and situations, where Media Education can be developed, offer several advantages in themselves. The school system allows a better order of objectives, a sequence, in one word systematicity. In our opinion it is particularly efficient in the gaining of objectives with regard to Media konwledge and the domain of the Media Literacy. On the other hand, the family is the base that supports values. It is an

8) Quiroz, Beatriz and others, "En torno al encuentro del niño y el hombre telespectador, a la luz de las culturas analítica e icónica" ("About the meetingbetween a child and an adult televiewer, from the perspective of analytic and iconic culture"). Academia Superior de Ciencias Pedagógicas de Valparaíso, 1983.

appropriate context to recognize one's own feelings, motivations and needs, the atmosphere in a family gives security and allows a bigger opening of oneself to others. I believe that the family offeres more consistency for the long-term forming of character.

To start with a school context to get to the family means in our experience to be able to take advantage of each context. The school allows more order and families allow for more continuality. Using some methodologies in this way we discovered that they were more effective than the ones developed only at scholar or family context.

We have called "Parents school" those experiences that start at school to reach the family, eventhough they do not involve only parents, but also children as they are really, the principal targets of our educative task.

3) Parent's School "Family and Television"

3.1.) Description

Objectives and some self-analysis ideas.

Moved by the ideas and experiences related before, we began in 1983 a research with the following objectives:

- to make a theoretical study about the influence of the Mass Media on the family specially T.V.
- to describe the familiar conditions of television reception in Valparaíso city, particularly with parents of 2nd grade students (7 or 8 years old).

- to build up a teaching unit from the needs discovered in the descriptive study to be applied at a Parent's School.
- to apply and evaluate the Parent's School in some schools.

This work is based on the theorical model that I have described: it is focused particularly on the points of view of self-analysis of motivations and needs. I think that it is appropriate to point out, in this moment, some ideas about it that I have published recently.

a) Motivations and needs.

We choose to see a particular program, or to buy a particular magazine or to see a particular movie because of some needs, some motivations and some personal interests.

Program, publicity and chronices are not made out, hazardously, they are produced, some times, with lots of psychology, knowing that they are going to satisfy motivations of the public, such as erotic ones, of status, power, adventure, of identity, and so on. To satisfy these needs is - most of the times - the task or resource of Mass Media through the programs or editions they produce.

The first task of education, particularly of Media Education, is to seek an awereness of the interests, needs or motivations that make the receiver prefer a particular message or media. The second task is to stimulate the autonomus behavior of the receiver of the message.

Adult's believe that they make decisions about the messages e.g. of publicity, but many times this is not so. Children doubtlessly are made into "persons" determined by Mass Media messages, and stimulating their autonomus behavior is to help them exist.

b) It is necessary to be aware.

If all children live in a world of fantasy and, indeed, they need to live in it, does it have any advantages to make them aware of the primary reality? Would it not be better to let them develop their children illusions? Would it not be better that they enjoy - as we did - being bewitched by the new fairy tales and the contemporary versions of an outer-space valiant prince?

I believe as a first criterion to solve these problems that every process of being aware must be gradual and ordered by the principles of developmental psychology and ethics.

Children build up their values structure starting from fables. Adult's good and bad for them is only "the good one" or "the bad one", characters from a fantastic world whose action only entertains us.

Sometimes I believe that adults'biggest mistake is to interpret and judge child TV messages reception with adults'criteria, without trying to understand first how children perceive those messages. Some quantitative data are scary: e.g. children see 4.000 deaths on TV in one year. Can it be that they have seen only action instead of death? Or that none of you, who played cowboys in your childhood, feels that by doing this you gained some criminal conduct?

I dont think that I can solve the problem through these lines but I want to propose as criteria the use of approaches from psychology and ethics.

c) Myths are necessary

... and adults. Don't we believe in fairy tales?

I believe that adults live whith an important amount of stereotyped models of reality. Teenagers look for models that make their personality appear "original" and unique. But they are repetitions, they copy models with a singular accuracy. Each younger generation has their own uniform and they identify themselves with it just as they identify with their likes, language, etc. Clothing allows to recognize their generation exactly in the same way that we could recognize Elvis Presley's bobby sockers.

Obviating the real problem of an identity acquisition for each person (titanic task in this massed world) and intending to get closer to existential reality, I believe that stereotypes and models showed to us by this consumery society are something like a necessary evil.

I do not believe that to destroy myths is a good educative strategy. I consider them necessary. I believe that we must encourage a qualitative development of them. We should orientate - as our educative action allows it - a better quality of stereotypes according to the values we seek for our youth and our society.

d) Looking for an opinion

Eventhough events are objective, information about events can not be objective - and it does not intend to. Young men and women who have access to information are persons, and they have their own value system,

beliefs, etc. that make them see reality subjectively. I say subjectively without a pejorative intention. I believe that everyone of us sees objects and events differently.

From my point of view the truth is that the reader or the viewer of messages does not indeed expect objective events. Common man looks for an opinion. He does not have enough time to interpret the reality that is around him, but he needs to think about it some way and to be able to have "an oun opinion". So he trusts his opinion in the international commentator, in his favorite newspaper or in the channel that interprets him better. He expects that the Media will be consequent with his value system and not to find out an interpretation out of his context. Media allow in this way an approximation to reality and build up an opinion; or critically saying it, manipulate reality.

e) Consciousness is dangerous

Consciousness is dangerous to whom wants to become a manipulator of others, to men who want to dominate others, driving them to be unconscious consumers of products or ideologies. Consciousness is necessary to grow up as authentic persons, but it needs situation in reality.

Consciousness of the own identity, of the stereotypes that I live with and of my own opinions are gateways for education and personal growing up.

Consciousness of the situation is also more important than former aspects because it is consciousness of the historical, geografical (temporal-spacial) axiological, teleological (values and goals) co-ordinates which I sup-

port. I would say in this point that to educate may be dangerous, it can make persons better human beings.

Methodology of descriptive analysis

A set of questions was applied to this sample with the following objectives:

- to know which kind of information family handles before watching a TV program, which alternative activities they perform and that resources they have for them.
- to determine when do parents, children and/or family watch TV, how much time they spend on it, when and who they watch TV with.
- to describe the needs that make parents, children and/or family watch TV and to observe to what extent these needs are satisfied.
- to know how parents, children or family react in front of different TV programs they watch.

Analyzing results of the questionary application it was established that:

Concerning objective 1: General information.

- A 26% of parents don't get any previous information about the TV schedule before watching the TV programs.
- When asking about selection criterion: a 29% of parents missed out their answer.
- A 60% of parents don't select the programs their children watch.

Concerning objective 2: Consumtion routine.

- The 32% of parents recognize they watch TV more than 2 or 3 hours a day, and 44% points out that their children watch more than 2 or 3 hours of TV daily.

Concerning objective 3: Why do you watch TV?

- We detected from the questionary that a 47% turns the TV set on because they are bored. Needs that lead parents to watch TV are:

Information : 60%

Entertainement : 54%

Distraction : 38%

Company : 18%

Concerning objective 4: How do you react?

- When we asked parents for their reactions in front of a program with violence, their answers were as it follows:

Discontent : 33%

Preoccupation : 32.7%

Sadness : 22.7%

Fright : 19.3%

Indifference : 10.3%

On the other hand, 42% of children expressed fright or anguish in front of determined situations watched in a TV program.

The analysis of the results of the descriptive analysis leaded us to formulate ten learning objectives that were framed in a syllabus for being worked out with parents of Second Basic level children in a six face to face programme of one and a half hours of duration approximately. Some of the activities were planned to be performed by parents at school, other to be performed by the children guided and graded by teachers, another to be performed by parents and children.

Methodology of syllabus

The objectives of the syllabus were the following:

First session:

Objective 1: Parents will be capable to handle at least two information resources (TV and newspaper) to select their programs and their children's.

Objective 2: Parents will be able to use resources that they have as alternative activities to watch TV.

Second session:

Objective 3: Parents or an adult of the family will be available to watch TV with children reducing the time that they watch.

Third session:

Objective 4: Family will be able to determine the place or places more appropriated to set the TV at home.

Objective 5: Parents will be able to discriminate between satisfying and compensating a need.

Objective 6: Parents will discovered the needs that they can satisfy through Mass Media.

Fourth session:

Objective 7: Parents, when they cannot satisfy their needs by alternative media of television, will be able to get aware that they have the possibility to compensate these needs through TV.

Objective 8: Parents will be able to get aware of their reactions in front of a TV program.

Fifth session:

Objective 9: Parents will be able to get their children aware of their reactions in front of a TV program.

Objective 10: Parents will be able to reduce the imitative behavior of their children about publicity messages.

Sixth session: Evaluation.

3.2.) Results

Experimental application at San Ignacio School

School parents took place at "San Ignacio de Loyola" School, with parents of Second Basic level.

A five meeting program was established so that at least every other sesion were within the previous established sessions with the teacher.

Parents' School was introduced by a motivational lecture.

During the first session parents designed a TV program schedule they would like to watch starting from programs appeared on newspapers or magazines and commentary of the high rating programs frequently watched by parents.

Apart from that they worked with a list of frequent activities in the week completing a scheme of utilization of alternativa media they got.

On the second session, parents filled a sheet with the programs their children watch during the week, they compared it with other previously required from the children by the teacher.

This activity moved a forum about desirable programs for children, about the design of a familiar schedule according to the interests of the group members. The second activity of this session is the handwork and analysis of a graph showing where TV sets are placed in the house, followed by a discussion about the convenience or inconvenience of the different alternatives.

The third session advanced in the analysis of the motivations giving parents the opportunity to dis-

criminate between compensating and satisfying needs. The work was centered on a grupal building of a collage about "Why do I watch TV? and a presentation of each collage and a discussion of the motivations and needs that appears in each.

During the fourth session parents worked on getting aware of the reactions in front of TV programs. Some group dynamic techniques were used such as role playing and "Phillips 66" for compareing e.g. how does anyone react in front of scary or triumph situations on TV and in real life. Parents also, through a dialog, got aware of childrens' reactions in front of determined TV programs ans discussed the imitative behavior of children specially about publicity.

In their final report of this application, monitor-teachers wrote: "Having the opportunity to carry out what we had built was really satisfying. Although, at the beginnings parents showed themselves unwilling to participate, the next sessions were each one more agreable, interesting and shared.

Parents became real collaborators of the sessions, e.g. the session where they had to build a collage about "Why do I watch TV?, there were six groups with an average of five parents each. The work was motivating, everyone cooperated in their groups and the result was very enriching. A final exposition of the collages was done by each group".(9)

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(9) Bravo, Sara - Chávez, Verónica - Guajardo, Marcela "Informe Aplicación Escuela de Padres "Familia y Televisión" Valparaíso, 1985.

Experimental application at Juan XXIII High School.

Three years after the Parents School was made up and tested we were interested in knowing its validity and to actualize our knowledge about the problems that TV aroeuses within the family from parents' perspective. With this purpose we decided to make again an experimental application of Parents' School. We considered necessary to go out from Valparaíso city to another suburban city, Villa Alemana, located at 30 km. from Valparaíso.

Parents' School was applied in a subsidized co-educational school with 1,800 students from Kindergarten to 12th grade. Parents who participated were chosen from three second grade groups and teachers in charge of those groups also participated this time as assesors. Parents' School was applied by Marcela Guajardo, one of the members of the team that built this methodology.

An initial session of motivation was added in this second application. It included a speech and participating games referred to TV themes to help parents'integration.

In the second session parents named the programs that they had watched the day before, talking about what they would like to watch and comparing it with TV programming. This session's activities were guided to find out alternatives to watch TV that could satisfy them the same or more than watching TV. Parents in five persons groups talked about and wrote down 10 activities that an ideal family without

TV would do and 10 activities that an ideal family with TV would do. Finally, a homework was given to parents. They had to complete a schedule with the times that their children watched TV. At the same time, children filled up a similar schedule with the programs that they had watched in the week guided by their teachers.

The third session started comparing the schedules filled by children with those ones filled by their parents. Obviously they showed a great difference from each other. "Some parents intend to justify themselves in the sense of saying: 'my child didn't see it', 'he/she only listened to it', etc. There were parents with answers similar to their children's". (10)

In relation to the purpose of determining the most appropriate place to set TV at home, most of parents placed it at the diningroom or at the adults' bedroom. This session finished with a game of selling a product in a 30" role playing spot.

In the fourth session, "through an exposition and a group participation we differentiated between compensation and satisfaction of needs. Then we started a group activity of building up a collage with theme "Why do I watch TV?". Here some opinions as "TV entertains us", "gives company", "distracts", "informs", "cultivates", etc. arose".(11)

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(10) GUAJARDO Marcela. Resultado de la aplicación de la Escuela de Padres, Familia y Televisión, 1988, Intern Document, Universidad de Playa Ancha de Cs. de la Educación, 1988.

(11) Ibidem.

This session was ended with a game of the unknown TV character that should be recognized. The winner team had prizes that were given to their children in classes the day after.

During the fifth session, parents were divided in to groups and they dramatized some special situations of real life for example, triumph, fright, happiness, sadness, violence. In front of the representation of each scene all the workshop participants should write down their reactions. An excellent participation was gained in this activity. After that, a forum was done, writing on the board the reactions that were most common in front of the seen scenes.

As homework, parents should watch some programs with their children; writing the reactions observed, their comments as also making up together a publicity spot with magazine cuttings.

In the last session, homework was commented and the most common childs reactions in front of the programs they prefered were written down. Each parent showed the spot that she/he made with their child explaining the motive of the message.

Is this second application of Parents' School the initial game had the purpose to break the ice. It motivated parents in such way that they wanted to have similar activities in each session. As an annexed result to the formulated objectives, a great participation and compromise of the parents was showed through the activities of the Parents'

School with a very high average of assistance. "They participated, without any difficulty, in the activities that were asked. They were capable to throw themselves to the floor, to dramatize, to talk and play as if it was a vital activity and they did their best. They were capable of giving themselves time to make a spot with their children including in some cases all the family inmersed in this homework". (12)

3.3) Perspectives for the near future.

Family and television is certainly a good way to develop Media Education in Chile and in latinoamerican countries. I am sure this is only one way. We are also developing other research lines at the Centro de Investigación de Medios para la Educación. In these days we are finishing two research works, the first one about correlations between academic goals and TV watching hours in High School students. The other one about the influence of female stereotypes in teenager girls also at High School level. Those descriptive researches gave us the oportunity to build better methodologies to educate specific TV viewers at school.

A Parents'School about Family and Television gives the family the possibility to improve TV perception of each family member. It also provides enough elements to improve relationship among parents, children and family relatives. TV programs then appear

(12) Ibidem.

as an appropriated content to the educational goals more than a subject in itself.

We hope to be able to diffuse Parents'School Family and Television as a media education method. Juan XXIII High School has asked us for a new experience with other groups of parents and other High Schools have also asked us for the application of the same method. As University our main purpose is prepare teachers and to train them in new educational ways.

We develop this line through workshops, seminars and regular post-title programs offered to teachers in service and to students of pedagogy. Since 1987 we are working in a post-title program for pre-school and elementary school teachers called "Medios para la Educación: Televisión y Computación". This is a three semester program where we are training the first group of teachers with specialization in Media Education in our country (and probably in Latinamerica). This is one of our most compromising task.

We carried out an experience in this way in 1984 in Concepcion involving 8 schools of the municipal system. We know that it is not easy to get parents compromised because fathers are frequently involved in their own job activities and mothers in domectic task.

When we can individualize parents highly motivated with childs education and with school activities we feel sure that we can train them

teachers in other schools and sometimes they want to replay this experience in their schools).

As it was said before Parents'School on Family and Television offers enough elements to be considered a good method to be applied on Media Education activities in our reality. School allows sistematicity of the educational objectives and family allows to get closer to the reality in which children watch TV; it is an insurance of values permanence Educating family through school will raise us to Media Educational goal: preparing an autonomous perceiver of media, a person who is able to decide what he/she wants to watch or read. Indeed, a person able to participate in the improvement of the society where he/she wants to live in.

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